Lave been an easy task. This might, however, Lave been effected; but it was a very serious question whether this course would not have tended strongly to intensify the hostile feeling existing throughout the South. Would it not—it was suggested—be better to forbear such precautionary measures, and to take the chance that the necessity for defending the Southern forts would never arise ? Wan the country fully prepared to take the ground that secession and rebellion must be crushed by main force ? Because, if the country was not prepared to go to this extent, the Government would Lave made a serious blunder. It would have taken a step which was certain to produce irritation attLeSoutL, and which might lead to revolutionary meunureB being adopted, of which the administration would be in popular estimation the unprovoked author, and which the Government, not having the support of the people, would be powerless to repress. For, however undefended the Southern forts actually were, and however inviting their undefended condition might render them to the disunioniste in the Cotton and Gulf States, it was quite possible that, if the Government should reinforce them in anticipation of the secession of those States, the danger of

those States seceding would actually be increased.

Mr. Buchanan carefully considered this question, and came to the conclusion that it would be unwise to reinforce the forts. His Secretary of State, General Cass, of Michigan, took the opposite view, and on being overruled, resigned about the middle of December.